

BOOK NOTICES

Marvels of Insect Life: A Popular Account of Structure and Habit. Edited by Edward Step. Intro. by Raymond L. Ditmars. Square 8vo., cloth, 486 pp., 640 illus., N. Y., Robert McBride & Co., 1938. \$3.75.

This is a new edition of a previously published popular presentation of common, well known facts—and fancies—regarding equally common and well known insects. A page by page comparison made by this reviewer of this latest with the former, apparently first, edition, published in 1915 by Hutchinson in London, reveals that the original very fine half tone text illustrations have been replaced by photographic reproductions, many of which are even better than those formerly used. The twelve colored plates which appeared in the first edition have been omitted, with the exception of those opposite pages 200 and 240, in which instances photographic reproductions of other subjects have been substituted for the color work. There appears to have been no change whatever in the original text, with the exception of the addition of three pages of appreciative introductory matter prepared by Dr. Ditmars. The arrangement of the subject matter entirely disregards order, family, or genus, but, instead, is so highly heterogenous as to lead its readers to wonder if it may have been placed in its present hit or miss sequence by sheer chance rather than by any orderly plan. The index, however, has been so carefully prepared and is so very thorough and complete that the lack of orderly arrangement of the text does not detract from the usability of the book and renders such lack practically unnoticed by most readers. If one may judge from the positively lavish output on part of various publishers at the present time, there verily must be an active steady demand by the reading public for scientific information administered in sugar-coated doses such as this. Indeed, there has been in just recent months such a plethora of books of this general type that possibly there might be no real excuse for giving space here to notice of another one except for the fact that the particular book now under consideration is

especially meritorious in that particular emphasis has been placed on insect photography by amateurs, and there has been provided a large number of unusually excellent examples for the emulation and the envy—and possibly the despair—of the amateur photographer, and this feature alone probably will render the book an outstanding one of its kind and will greatly augment its demand.—J. S. W.

The Garden Dictionary, an Encyclopedia of Practical Horticulture, Garden Management and Landscape Design. Edited by Norman Taylor. Quarto, cloth, 888 pp., numerous illustrations, 20 plates in full color, map, Boston, Mass., Houghton, 1938. \$7.50.

The scope of this notice is limited to discussion of only such of the various subdivisions of the subject matter of the above work as are of entomological interest. In preliminary to this, it should be stated that it has been the principal objective of the Editor and the 68 specialists who have contributed to this composite work to produce a reference book that would possess a permanent value and would be as nearly as possible indispensable to all gardeners. The guiding principle throughout has been expert knowledge and advice translated into the simplest possible terms. It was suggested to the specialist-contributor that: "Your article must not be written for the experts, but it must be apparent that it has been written by one." The compilation represents several years of work and the hearty cooperation of many individuals and institutions. It has been so planned as to be an index to itself, so simply arranged as to render it easy to find desired data with a minimum of groping among momentarily useless features. Thousands of cross word items have been inserted to lead one directly to the needed information, and over 4,400 common and vernacular names are similarly cross-referenced to the articles where their culture is discussed. No word of special import has been used unless that word is defined at its proper vocabulary entry, thus obviating necessity for use of other reference works to understand the terms used in this one. Since the contents of the book are arranged in strictly dictionary form, it is obvious that the principal sections dealing with entomological subjects are to be found under such